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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/527,501	02/10/2006	Sridhar Makam P. Kumar	CL2042USPCT	9955

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E. I. Du Pont De Nemours and Company
Legal Patent Records Center
4417 Lancaster Pike
Wilmington, DE 19805

EXAMINER

KALAFUT, STEPHEN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1795

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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02/08/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/527,501

Applicant(s)

KUMAR ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen J. Kalafut

Art Unit

1795

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 and 34-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 32 and 33 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 March 2005 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 25 Aug 2005
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Inventor's Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____

Claims 32 and 33 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim may not depend from another multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims have not been further treated on the merits. Claim 32 depends from claims 29, 30 or 31. Claim 31 depends from claim 30, which depends from claim 27, which depends from claim 23. Claim 29 depends from claim 26, which depends on claim 23. Claim 23 depends from claim 18, which depends from claim 13 or 14. Thus, multiple dependent claim 32 depends on another multiple dependent claim. Claim 33 depends on claim 33, and would thus likewise be improperly multiple dependent.

Claims 1-31 and 34-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. There is no antecedent for "the maximum load" in claim 1. Claims 2-32 and 34-37 depend from claim 1, and would thus also be indefinite.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Drawing numerals 11 and 12, in figure 1, are not found in the specification. Appropriate correction is required.

Claims 1-31 and 34-37 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action. The prior art cited either below or by applicants does not disclose a method of operating a fuel cell, which comprises removing its load, cycling between a minimum voltage and at least about 50% of a

maximum voltage until a maximum current is reached, and cycling between a minimum and at least about 50% of a maximum load until a maximum voltage is reached.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kumar *et al.* (US 2006/0172159), by the present inventors, discloses a method of operating a fuel cell in which the fuel cell is subjected to an electric field from an external power source, to regain lost power. Lacy *et al.* (US 6,428,917), Roberts *et al.* (US 6,479,177) and Meltser *et al.* (US 6,265,092) disclose methods of operating fuel cells in which the flow rate of a reactant is varied or the fuel cell is purged.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen J. Kalafut whose telephone number is 571-272-1286. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:00 am-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick J. Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Stephen J. Kalafut/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1795